



# CHRISTIAN NEWS FROM ISRAEL

EDITED BY DR. CH. WARDI

GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL  
MINISTRY OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS  
JERUSALEM



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VOL. III. No. 3-4

NOVEMBER 1952

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## CHRONICLE OF EVENTS

### MR. A. VERGANI HONORARY CITIZEN OF NAZARETH

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of his ordination, Mgr. A. Vergani, Patriarchal Vicar of Galilee and Representative of the Latin Patriarch in Israel, was awarded honorary citizenship of Nazareth by the Municipality of that town.

Mgr. Vergani has been living in Nazareth for the last 15 years and has consistently evinced a helpful attitude in dealing with the special problems of the town, more specially those created by changes since 1948. He has actively contributed to the improvement of living conditions in Nazareth and its environs.

"Christian News" associates itself with the good wishes extended to Mgr. Vergani on this festive occasion.

### PENTECOST 1952

On June 1st, Pentecost was celebrated in all Christian Churches of Western rites in Israel. In Jerusalem, His Beatitude Mgr. Gori crossed from the Old City on the morning of the feast, accompanied by Mgr. Enrici, Councillor of the Apostolic Delegate of Jerusalem and Palestine, Mgr. Girard, Don Beltriti and Don Emmanuel Sawalha.

Mgr. Gori celebrated Pontifical Mass at the Church of the Dormition, assisted by Mgr. Vergani, who came for this purpose from Galilee, by Mgr. Girard and Don Beltriti as Canons, as well as by the Rev. Father Paul Piza, a Spanish Benedictine, and the Rev. Father Jean-Roger, a French Assumptionist.

In the afternoon a group of Franciscan Fathers of the Custody of the Holy Land crossed the lines for their traditional pilgrimage to the Cenacle.

### PENTECOST IN THE EASTERN CHURCHES

The Greek Orthodox, the Armenians, the Copts and the Abyssinians celebrated Pentecost on June 8th. The Greek Orthodox community of Jerusalem held their ceremony at the church of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission. The liturgy was served by the Archimandrite

Polycarp, who was assisted by the clergy of the Mission. The Armenians, whose main centre is now in Jaffa, celebrated at their church in Jerusalem.

#### **HOLY TRINITY IN THE RUSSIAN CHURCH IN JERUSALEM**

On June 9th, the Russian church in Jerusalem was the scene of a solemn ceremony celebrated by His Grace Archbishop Athenagoras, the Representative of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch, who arrived for this purpose from the Old City. He was accompanied by two archimandrites and two deacons. The ceremony was attended by worshippers from various parts of the country, as well as by representatives of the Government and several members of the Consular Corps.

#### **A NEW GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH TO BE BUILT IN A VILLAGE OF NORTHERN ISRAEL**

On June 8th, the corner-stone for a new church to be built in the village of Isfiya was laid by Mgr. George Hakim, the Greek Catholic Archbishop of Galilee.

Isfiya is a village of approximately 2,000 inhabitants, about one quarter of whom are Christians and the rest Druzes. The ceremony was attended by ecclesiastical dignitaries, senior Government officials and members of the Consular Corps of Haifa. The church will be completed by the Autumn of 1953. The architect is Dr. Abraham Nemes, Honorary Consul of Finland in Haifa.

#### **FEAST OF THE HOLY CHURCH OF ETCHMIADZIN**

On June 22nd, the Armenian Community celebrated the Feast of the Holy Church of Etchmiadzin. This is an ancient Holy Day observed by the Armenian nation and dating back to the 4th century, when St. Gregory the Illuminator built a centre for the Armenian Church in the plains below Mt. Ararat.

On the occasion of this feast special prayers are said for the Holy Etchmiadzin as the Seat of the Catholicos of All Armenians, the head of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

#### **FEAST OF ST. JOHN IN EYN KEREM**

On June 24th, the Franciscan community in Israel celebrated the Feast of St. John in the Titular's church at Eyn Kerem.

#### **A GREEK ORTHODOX ECCLESIASTICAL COURT OF APPEAL IN ISRAEL**

On June 24th, the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem informed the Minister of Religious Affairs that the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate, at its meeting held on June 16th, had decided to establish an Ecclesiastical Court of Appeal in the State of Israel. At this Court appeals would be lodged from the judgments of Greek Orthodox



Ecclesiastical Courts of the First Instance which sit at Nazareth, Acre, Haifa and Jaffa.

The Court of Appeal will be constituted as follows: Rt. Rev. Archbishop of Philadelphia, Epiphanius—President; Rev. Archimandrite Ignatios and Rev. Archimandrite Isidoros—Members; Rev. Archimandrite Efstathios and Rev. Simon—Assessors. Mr. Loutfallah Hanna will act as clerk.

The address of the Court will be: The Ecclesiastical Court of Appeal of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem in the State of Israel, c/o the Greek Orthodox Convent, Jaffa.

#### **THE APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO VENEZUELA IN ISRAEL**

On June 28th, His Exc. Mgr. Armando Lombardi, titular Archbishop of Caesarea Philippi, Apostolic Nuncio to Venezuela, arrived in Jerusalem with a group of 77 pilgrims. Mgr. Lombardi spent five days in the Holy Land, visiting the Holy Places in Israel and in the Old City of Jerusalem.

#### **FEAST OF ST. PETER IN JAFFA**

On June 29th, the Catholics of all rites in Jaffa celebrated the Feast of St. Peter. The Very Rev. Father Leonardo Donnalioia, Custodial President, who came over from the Old City of Jerusalem, celebrated mass in the church of St. Peter, assisted by his Italian and English "discreti", the Rev. Fathers Sabino Marotta and Bonaventura Simon.

#### **FEAST OF THE VISITATION IN EYN KEREM**

On July 2nd, the Feast of the Visitation was celebrated in the new sanctuary dedicated to the Visitation in Eyn Kerem. Solemn mass was said by the Very Rev. Father Jaime Llull, Vice-Procurator of the Custody of the Holy Land, who arrived from the Old City accompanied by a large group of religious personnel. This was the first major celebration after the church had been redecorated by the Italian artist Vagarini.

#### **PENTECOSTAL CLERGY IN ISRAEL**

At the beginning of July a party of Pentecostal clergymen from the U.S. and South Africa arrived in this country, after having attended the 3rd World Conference of Pentecostal Churches, held in London from June 27th to July 5th. The party entered Israel from the Old City of Jerusalem. The group stayed in Israel for four days. Their leader, Rev. Christian Hild, expressed his belief that "this is the time ordained for the Jewish people to come into its own in Palestine", according to the Pentecostal prophetic interpretations of the Bible.

A further Pentecostal visitor to Israel was Rev. Howard Carter, Chairman of the Assemblies of God in England and Principal of the

Hampstead Bible School. Rev. Carter arrived on September 22nd on his way to Lucknow (India) where he was going to attend a Conference of Pentecostal Churches.

#### **ETHIOPIAN BISHOP CALLS ON ACTING PRESIDENT**

On July 10th, His Grace Abouna Philippos Mengistu, Ethiopian Bishop of Jerusalem, accompanied by an official of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, called on Mr. Sprinzak, Acting President of the State of Israel.

The Bishop stressed the ancient ties of friendship existing between the Ethiopian and Jewish nations and, while conveying his gratitude for the fair treatment accorded to the Ethiopian Church in Israel, expressed his hopes for the renewal of these old bonds of friendship.

#### **BAPTIST PASTOR LEAVES FOR U.S.A.**

On July 25th, Rev. R. L. Lindsey, Pastor of the Jerusalem Baptist Church, left for Louisville, Kentucky, in order to complete his studies and to present his doctor's thesis.

Mr. Lindsey has lived in Jerusalem for the last eight years, taking an active interest in Israel's cultural and public life. He is expected back in Jerusalem at the beginning of 1954. He has been temporarily replaced by Rev. B. Elmo Scoggin, until now Head of the George Truett Home Orphanage in Nazareth, which will now come under the direction of Mr. Milton Murphey of Indiana.

#### **FEAST OF ST. NICODEMUS IN RAMLEH**

On August 6th, Transfiguration Day, solemn mass was celebrated in Ramleh, which, according to tradition, is the burial place of the Saint. Solemn mass was celebrated by the Vice-Procurator of the Custody, the Very Rev. Father Jaime Llull, who came for this purpose from the Old City.

#### **TRANSFIGURATION DAY ON MOUNT TABOR**

On August 6th, Transfiguration Day, solemn mass was celebrated on Mount Tabor by the Very Rev. Father Leonardo Donnaloia, Custodial President. Large groups of villagers from Galilee and other parts of the country were present.

#### **RETURN OF THE CUSTOS OF THE HOLY LAND FROM HIS JOURNEY TO CANADA AND THE U.S.A.**

On August 10th, the Most Rev. Father Hyacinth Faccio, Custos of the Holy Land, returned to Jerusalem after a visit of nearly three months to Canada and the United States. His Paternity left Jerusalem on May 15th, and, after a short stay in Rome, where he reported to Cardinal Tisserant, went on to Canada and later to Washington and



New York. In the course of his journey, the Custos visited his "Commissioners", and delivered lectures to various bodies and organizations. In New York he was received by Cardinal Spellman. On his way back he visited Barcelona, Rome and Beirut.

#### **THE FEAST OF "OUR LADY QUEEN OF PALESTINE"**

On August 17th the Latin diocese of Jerusalem celebrated the feast of the "Most Holy Virgin Queen of Palestine". It may be recalled that this festivity was instituted by the late Latin Patriarch, Mgr. Barlassina, and is celebrated with great solemnity at Deir Rafat.

#### **GROUP OF FINNISH CHRISTIANS TO SETTLE IN ISRAEL**

A group of six Finnish families are planning to settle in Israel shortly and to set up a factory for the building of pre-fabricated houses to help solve the housing shortage in Israel. The group, led by Mr. Karl Sanfrid Mattson, call themselves "Lovers of the Old Testament" and, in the words of Mr. Mattson, want to live in the Land of the Bible in order to "assist and participate in the great reconstruction of the State of Israel, by immigrating and settling in the country."

The group are at present conducting negotiations with the Jewish Agency to obtain a 50-dunam plot of land which will enable them to set up their factory and houses and start some auxiliary farming. The group are providing their own machinery and are planning to work as a non-profit-making undertaking. Any part of their equipment still needed will be provided free of charge by the Finnish Government as a donation to the State of Israel.

#### **INCREASED PILGRIMAGES TO ISRAEL**

There has been a considerable increase in pilgrim traffic to this country during the months May—September of this year. During that time, up to September 15th, the number of pilgrims totalled 1,534, the first half of September alone accounting for 400. The largest contingents of pilgrims hailed from the United States, Venezuela, Mexico and France—the latter heading the list with 164 pilgrims during the first two weeks in September. Others came from Sweden, Spain, Guatemala, Holland, Australia and various other countries.

Among outstanding Church dignitaries who visited this country during that period were Archbishop Paul Schulke of the U.S. and the Papal Nuncio in Venezuela, Mgr. Armando Lombardi.

#### **REV. SCOTT-MORRISON RETURNS TO SCOTLAND**

On August 20th, a farewell tea was given by the Jerusalem Rotary Club and the Y.M.C.A., at the latter's building in Jerusalem, for Rev. Scott-Morrison, of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Jerusalem.

The Rev. Scott-Morrison is returning home after 18 years' service

in this country, to which he first came as a newly ordained clergyman in 1934. He was then put in charge of the Church of Scotland Mission in Jaffa, which also included the Scottish hospital in Tiberias and the Tabitha School in Jaffa. He left this country in 1948, but returned in 1949 as Minister of the Memorial Church of St. Andrews in Jerusalem.

His successor has not yet been appointed. In the meantime, the Rev. H. L. Minard, of the Jerusalem Y.M.C.A., is conducting services at the St. Andrews church.

Rev. Scott-Morrison's departure is regretted by his many friends among all sections of the population, who hope that he may come back to this country to which he is so deeply attached.

#### NON-JEWISH STUDENTS AT HEBREW UNIVERSITY

There are at present 14 non-Jewish students studying at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, most of whom are Christians. Of these 7 are Arabs, 3 Druzes, 2 Norwegians, 1 Belgian and 1 Australian. All these students attend and follow the lectures given in Hebrew, and are thus becoming proficient in a language which is strange to most of them, being very different from their mother tongues.

The two Norwegians, Riis Per Kare and Artun Kjel, are the holders of scholarships established by "Aliyath Hanoar" as a token of its gratitude for the help the Norwegian nation gave to Jewish children during the war. Both of them were previously students at Oslo University and are now studying Semitic Languages.

André Lecocque, the Belgian, who came here with his family, studied Protestant theology at the Sorbonne and then wrote his thesis on "Polish Hassidism in the 18th century". He is now studying Bible and Jewish History. Douglas John Lancelot, from Australia, formerly studied at Sydney University and came to Jerusalem on a scholarship of the Presbyterian Church. He is studying archaeology and works under Professor Sukenik.

Of the Druzes, Kasem Kamal of Ramah near Acre, who is taking Law, and Qasim Qasim, who is studying Economics, are successful Hebrew free-lance journalists. The third Druze, Mansour Kamal, is waiting to take his degree in Oriental Studies.

Most of the Arab students hail from Nazareth and district. The eldest of the seven, Khleif Bahjat, takes Arab Language, Literature and History, while the second, Muammat Elias, a Greek Orthodox from Nazareth, studies Mathematics, Economics and Statistics. Zuibi Mahmud, Khazim Azmi, and Zeineh Rasheed are taking Physics and Mathematics and Iraqi Husni and Saba Elias study Law.

All these students play their part in the life of the University and are active members of the student body.



## OBITUARY

### ARCHIMANDRITE MELETII

On September 6th, the Archimandrite Meletii (Rosov), oldest member of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission, died in Jerusalem, at the age of 80. The funeral service was held at the Russian church and was conducted by Archimandrite Polycarp with the assistance of the Greek Archimandrite Ignatios and in the presence of a large attendance including Government representatives. The deceased was laid to rest at the cemetery of the Eyn Kerem monastery.

The late Rev. Meletii came to Jerusalem in 1908, where he was promoted to the rank of archimandrite by the Jerusalem Patriarch Damianos. He acted as Director of the Mission for some time and in later years became its Treasurer.

### ARCHIMANDRITE EFSTATHIOS DRISTOS

Archimandrite Efstathios Dristos, who passed away on October 19th last, at the age of 60, was born at Alatsata in Asia Minor. He came to Jerusalem in 1908 and joined the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre. In 1914 he was made a deacon; in 1937 he took priestly orders and from 1938 till 1947 was Superior at Ramleh. Promoted archimandrite in 1950, he also became Superior in Jaffa. His devotion and indefatigability earned him the esteem of the Israel Authorities and the love and the veneration of the Christian community.

An immense crowd attended the funeral in Jaffa on October 20th. Those present included the Consul General of Greece and the District Commissioner of Jaffa. The ceremony was performed by His Grace the Archbishop of Tiberias, assisted by members of the clergy from various parts of the country. The body was brought to Ramleh and buried in the garden of the convent.



## THREE YEARS OF PILGRIMAGES

(15.9.49—15.9.52)

From a Report of the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Pilgrimages

### *Constitution of the Committee*

The Inter-Ministerial Committee for all questions relating to pilgrimages was set up, at the suggestion of the Counsellor for Christian Communities at the Ministry of Religious Affairs, by a Cabinet decision taken in September 1949. The Committee was successively presided over by the Director-General of the Ministry of Immigration, the representative of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on the Committee, and the Director for Immigration at the Ministry of the Interior.

The Committee was composed of representatives of the following Departments:—The Prime Minister's Office, the Ministries for Foreign Affairs, Immigration (until the dissolution of that Ministry), Defence, Finance, Religious Affairs, Communications, Food and Police, and the Government Tourist Centre.

An official of the Tourist Centre was appointed Secretary-General of the Committee and charged with the task of coordinating the various activities of the Committee and carrying into effect the decisions taken by it.

Two sub-committees were set up at Haifa and Jerusalem respectively to deal with local problems connected with pilgrimages. They comprised representatives of the District Commissioner, the Ministries of Immigration, Religious Affairs, Trade and Industry, the local Tourist Bureau and the Municipality. The Director of the local Tourist Bureau acts as Chairman of the sub-committee. The Secretary-General of the Central Committee coordinates the activities of the two sub-committees.

### *Object of the Committee*

Many Christians throughout the world are anxious to go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land to offer prayer at the Holy Places and to pursue Biblical or archaeological studies. For a number of years organised pilgrimage had become practically impossible, owing to disturbances during the last pre-war years, then to the World War, and finally to the Arab war against Israel. When the hostilities came to an end, the Israel Government, which had undertaken to ensure freedom of access to the Holy Places, decided to set up a special machinery and to accord all possible aid and assistance to those who wished to make the pilgrimage to the country. The setting up of an inter-ministerial Committee was a first step in this direction. The Committee was faced with a number of urgent problems. Arrangements had to be made to facilitate the granting of visas to would-be pilgrims. An understanding had to be reached with the Jordan authorities, to enable pilgrims to visit Holy Places on both sides of the border. Roads leading to the Holy Places

had to be repaired, monasteries which had suffered from the bombardment had to be rebuilt, hotel accommodation, food supplies and means of transport had to be provided for the expected visitors. Moreover, steps had to be taken to inform the Christian world that after an interruption of over ten years the Holy Land was again open to pilgrims. The approach of the Catholic Holy Year in 1950 lent added urgency to all these problems.

On the 21st October 1949 the following communique was published:

"The State of Israel is anxious to help and encourage pilgrimages to the Holy Land and to facilitate, wherever possible, the entry of pilgrims into Israel as well as the exit of those anxious to visit Rome. An inter-ministerial Committee has been set up to solve all problems concerning pilgrimages and to work out the plans for the pilgrims' stay in the country. Negotiations are in progress regarding the passage of pilgrims from one zone of Jerusalem to the other."

### *Preparatory Steps*

The Committee has been functioning since September 1949. Among the first measures taken by its authority was the repair of the roads leading to the Holy Places in Israel. The problem of arranging for the passage of pilgrims from one part of Jerusalem to the other was submitted to the Israel-Jordan Mixed Armistice Commission, and after lengthy negotiations a special frontier post was set up. The necessary facilities for customs control, health examination, currency exchange, and security were established.

At the instance of the Committee, instructions were issued by the Foreign Ministry to all Consulates abroad to facilitate the granting of visas to groups of pilgrims. Customs posts were instructed to speed up the pilgrims' entry into the country. A request was addressed to hotels, pensions, hospices and convents to provide facilities for the accommodation of pilgrims. As a result of these efforts, accommodation for two thousand pilgrims had been secured by January 1950. In conjunction with the Ministry of Food and Trade, extra rations were provided for the pilgrims. Guide-books were issued in several languages, and a special course for professional guides was organised which was attended by forty students.

The Committee requested the Christian ecclesiastical authorities to give their help and cooperation, and as a result of such efforts an organisation was set up for ensuring effective collaboration with the Christian religious orders.

As time went on, constant improvements were made in the arrangements for the reception of pilgrims as a result of the experience gained and the comments made by the pilgrims themselves. From the beginning,

a detailed monthly report was sent by the Committee to the government departments concerned.

### *Summary of Three Years' Activities*

As a result of these preparatory steps the Holy Year of 1950 found the State of Israel ready to receive all pilgrims that came to the country. The first group arrived on January 3rd 1950. This was followed by twenty-seven organised groups in 1950, by forty groups in 1951, and by sixty-two in 1952. The pilgrims hailed from the following countries:—

U.S.A., France, Italy, Colombia, Switzerland, Canada, Mexico, Sweden, Venezuela, Brazil, Belgium, Argentina, Cuba, Philippines, Spain, Australia, Panama, Peru, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Chile, Guatemala, Portugal, San Domingo, Holland, Bolivia, England, Luxembourg, Japan, Equador, Vietnam, Ireland, Austria, Denmark, Rumania, India, Ceylon, Poland, New Zealand, the Vatican City, and the U.S.S.R.

Most pilgrims took the following itinerary:—Nazareth, Mount Tabor, Tiberias, Capernaum, Mount of the Beatitudes, Galilee, Emek Yezreel, Haifa, Jaffa, Ramleh, Abu Ghosh, Eyn Kerem and Jerusalem. They then crossed the border into the Jordan-controlled Old City of Jerusalem. Some pilgrims first visited the Holy Places in the Old City and crossed into Israel territory thereafter.

The Committee also made arrangements to enable Christian citizens of Israel to cross to the Old City, and Christian pilgrims from Jordan to visit Holy Places in Israel territory. In this way several thousand Christian Arabs resident in Israel were able to visit the Old City of Jerusalem and Bethlehem on Christian Holy Days during 1950/51. Members of the Christian clergy and of religious orders resident in the country enjoy the fullest facilities of movement across the border. On an average 300 Christian clergymen, including a number of Arabs, pass the frontier in both directions every month. Permanent passes are issued to ecclesiastical heads of the several Christian communities.

### *Appreciations*

The Israel authorities have received many letters from pilgrims and from high Christian authorities in the Holy Land in connection with the special facilities provided for visiting the Holy Places.

His Beatitude, Mgr. Gori, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, in a letter to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, expressed his "greatest satisfaction" at the "facilities accorded to pilgrims, whether it be in Jerusalem or in Israel as a whole..."

Mgr. Vergani, Patriarchal Vicar in Israel, wrote a letter addressed to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs: "At the same time may I congratulate you on the arrangements made by your Government in the past Holy Year for the visit, in absolute security and in a spirit of full co-operation, of Christian pilgrims from many countries to the Holy Places



in Jerusalem and Nazareth. We are also deeply grateful for the facilities generally given by your Government to religious personnel for access to the Old City and back from there. . . .”

Mgr. George Hakim, Greek Catholic Archbishop of Galilee, expressed himself in similar terms:—“... It is also our happy duty to refer with appreciation to the successful arrangements made by your Government, in connection with the Holy Year and since, for the facilitation of Christmas pilgrimages from all over the world to Christian Holy Places in Jerusalem and elsewhere in the Holy Land. The obligation of according free access to Christian shrines, fulfilled in full safety and goodwill, lays us in deep debt to your Government. Also may I pay tribute to the facilities given to Church personnel and local pilgrims for crossing the lines freely in Jerusalem. . . .”

The Greek Orthodox Archbishop, Mgr. Epiphanius, writing on behalf of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch in Jerusalem, stated:—“... Facilities for unrestricted access from and through Israel territory to the Christian Holy Places in Jerusalem have been accorded securely and in dignity. We know well that the Israel Government has acted thus in accordance with its basic and permanent policy and we are sure that same policy will continue in the future, Israel thus fulfilling faithfully its obligations to the Christian World. . . .”

Mgr. Jacobus, Coptic Archbishop for Jerusalem and the Near East, in a letter to the Minister for Religious Affairs, wrote:—“... The assistance tendered to us in regard to our Church properties, freedom of movement of our priests of Egyptian nationality, and in many other spheres is acknowledged with thanks. We know well that our future is secure in your midst and that the friendship developed during the past three years will permanently govern the relations between us. We Christian Copts can furthermore testify to your Government's faithful fulfilment of the solemn undertaking of the grant of free and secure access to Christian shrines in Jerusalem and elsewhere in the Holy Land; and we are confident of your preparedness and your capacity to continue to do so in the future. . . .”

Similar declarations were made by the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem and by representatives of Protestant Churches.

## IMPRESSIONS OF A VISITOR FROM THE ARGENTINE\*

By *Mgr. Gustavo J. Franceschi*

Under the heading "Miradas sobre Israel", a series of feature articles on Israel, contributed by Mgr. Gustavo J. Franceschi after a visit to this country, was recently published in the Argentine review "Criterio". To use his own words, the author confined himself to reporting without elaboration what he saw, felt and thought during his stay in the Holy Land.

Unfortunately, we have not the space for a complete translation of Mgr. Franceschi's articles, which display a measure of insight, fairness and objectivity characteristic of great minds. He is well alive to the difficulties inherent in his self-imposed task of unbiassed observer. "When approaching any problem connected with Israel", he writes, "emotion is bound to intervene to a greater or lesser extent. For the Hebrews do not appear to us like any other people; we feel that they have something to do with us spiritually." In another passage he states: "as we were taught on several occasions by Pius XI and by His Holiness Pius XII, it is not possible for a Catholic to be an anti-Semite."

Mgr. Franceschi does not hesitate to maintain that the theological breach between Christianity and Judaism "is no ground for hatred towards individual Jews or the People of Israel as a whole." "I am not one of those," he asserts, "who see only perfection in Israel; however, I intend even less to join the ranks of those who see nothing but perversity and wickedness in the Hebrews."

The writer then reviews the progress achieved in the fields of economy, agriculture, immigration, etc., during the period of less than four years following the establishment of the State. Here he prefers to let facts and figures speak for themselves, and confines his task to selecting them objectively. "I could quote many other statistical data just as instructive as these", he concludes. "They all point to the magnitude of the effort and to its purpose: to build a self-supporting State, not by more or less clever financial tricks, but by the organized and methodical work of its citizens. To anyone not blinded by prejudice, these are obvious facts—not a question of likes or dislikes."

Referring to immigration as an essential factor in the metamorphosis which Israel is undergoing at present, the writer sums up the story of the Diaspora since the days when the Jews were exiled to Babylon, devoting a few words to the "tremendous Odyssey of the s.s. Exodus engaged in the so-called *illegal immigration* under the Mandate, wandering all over the Mediterranean without finding a port where she could deliver herself of her wretched human load." Mgr.

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Franceschi has also a word of sympathy for those Jewish communities that are still living under oppression in their countries of exile and to whom Israel offers the only hope of redemption. He quotes as an example "the case of the 40,000 Yemenite Jews whose horrible plight at the hands of the Moslem population had its climax in the pogroms of 1947, whereupon it was decided to bring them to Israel, in an operation which demanded the use of air transport on a big scale."

Among the many problems created by mass immigration, the author mentions the economic one in its manifold aspects, and that of "grafting on the majority of the inhabitants a common mentality reaching beyond the boundaries of religion and race. For the solution of the latter problem", he adds, "the Israelis put their hopes on three main factors: mystical impulse, language and the children."

"The Jews who emigrate to Israel", he explains, "are not enticed by the lure of material advantages; they anticipate, on the contrary, a worsening of their condition which in many cases actually takes place. But they are urged by a mystical hope and feeling of home-coming that predisposes them to kindness, mutual understanding and benevolence, in one word, to unity."

Mgr. Franceschi goes on to describe the role played by the Hebrew language as a cohesive force in the process of amalgamating the heterogeneous elements of the Yishuv, tracing it back to the days when the eminent writer and philologist Eliezer Ben Yehuda, "endowed with unfaltering will-power, devoted his whole life to the compilation of the great dictionary that provided the foundation of modern Hebrew. Seldom has the initiative of one man achieved so much", he asserts; "the Hebrew tongue has been widely disseminated, adapted to modern needs and enriched with words derived from old roots, as well as with the indispensable neologisms; its use is not confined to Israel but has spread wherever Jews live, and it covers such disparate fields as philosophy, technology and commercial advertising."

"And finally the children. We have seen them in towns, in kibbutzim and settlements of other types, always healthy, happy, well clothed and cared for by specially trained teachers and nurses. And in large numbers too, because as far as I could ascertain birth-control is a very restricted practice in Israel. Endeavours are made not to separate them according to countries of origin, so that differences may be naturally minimised."

Of paramount interest to the reader will be Mgr. Franceschi's article "Catholics in Israel". Accordingly, we append this in a complete translation, followed by a condensed version of his essay on "The Religious Problem in Israel".

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## CATHOLICS IN ISRAEL

The dominant interest of my visit to Eretz Israel was the Catholic Community and the circumstances affecting it. I knew what these had been before: peace under the British mandate, alternate periods of quiet and of terrible persecution under Turkish rule. I was, of course, acquainted with the text of the *Proclamation of Independence of the State of Israel*, dated 5th Iyar, 5708, i.e., 14th May, 1948, whose paragraph 13 reads: "The State of Israel... will be based on the principles of liberty, justice and peace as conceived by the Prophets of Israel; will uphold the full social and political equality of all its citizens, without distinction of religion, conscience, education and culture; will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions". If interpreted and carried out in their broad meaning, these words would assure the Catholics sufficient tranquillity, individual as well as collective, for the exercise of their cult and for the subsistence of the Church as an institution. I say, provided they were put into practice,—because modern history presses upon our minds the memory of no less solemn utterances that were of no avail, such as those contained in the last Soviet Constitution or in the Concordat between Hitler and the Holy See, both of which were no sooner signed than violated. Setting documents aside, however, what is *actually* happening in Israel?

I shall answer this question faithfully on the basis of what I saw and heard. Personally, I was never put to the slightest inconvenience, either as a Christian or as a clergyman. I do not know whether all the Jews I happened to meet there entertained warm feelings towards me. I do not know either why they should. But, one way or another, I never met with the faintest lack of courtesy. Friendliness, not cold formality, was what I met in all my dealings with officials and private persons alike.

As there was never a Catholic majority in the area, Israel has but few churches. These, however, enjoy unrestricted freedom of action; their internal affairs are not interfered with either by private individuals or by State institutions. This applies to religious and civil liberties in general as well; not a single Catholic complained to me of restrictions or hindrances of any kind. Habited monks and nuns walk undisturbed in the streets, and this in itself is more than can be said of many European countries. As a matter of fact I was in this respect less favourably impressed by certain European towns than by Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa, or Acre, for example.

It has become a problem with the Catholic Church in Israel how to fulfil its task in parishes that were left with almost no parishioners following the mass flight of the Arabs during the war. According to official figures, however, only 50 per cent of the 70,000 Christian residents left the country, as against 80 per cent of the 630,000 Moslems who lived in the territory now included within the boundaries of the Jewish State. Furthermore, the restriction imposed by the Government of Is-

rael on persons seeking to return to the country are less severely applied in the case of Christians. The decline of such parishes is due, therefore, not to ill-will but to historical circumstances, and it is to be hoped that in the course of time the situation will improve. In those places where there are Christian Arabs in considerable numbers, as in Nazareth, for example, religious life flourishes without let or hindrance.

On the 19th November, 1951, the Greek-Catholic Archbishop of Galilee, Mgr. G. Hakim, conveyed to the Government of Israel his "deep satisfaction . . . with the establishment of friendly relations between the Greek-Catholic community headed by us and the Government of Israel. It is only natural that in a young State which rose to life in such difficult circumstances there should have been moments of tension, but now that these are passed our community can face the future with confidence, reassured by the stability of intercommunal relations. We should like to mention in particular the interest taken by your Government in the problems of restoring Church property and providing education". I had the honour of meeting Mgr. Hakim in person, and he confirmed every word of the letter just quoted. It can also be said that the Roman Catholics under the jurisdiction of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem have no unbridgeable differences either with the authorities or with the Jewish population. In short, the situation nowadays is better in Israel than in many a country of Christian tradition.

And now I shall answer a question that has been put to me, namely, whether the missionaries will be able to proceed with their work in Israel.

In Palestine, they had devoted themselves mainly to charity. I believe that in future the scope of their work in this field will be greatly reduced as far as Israel is concerned, for the simple reason that there are not many Arabs left in the country and the social welfare services of the Government are so extensive and efficient that there is not much room for private initiative.

On the other hand, preaching has never been regarded as a suitable means for attracting people to Christianity in Israel. Whether conducted amongst Hebrews or Moslems, it has always proved ineffective even outside Palestine. History offers only two instances of mass conversion of Jews: in Rome, during the apostolic era, and in Spain, at the time of the Renaissance. But then we know only too well that the conversion of Spanish Jews was achieved by force and that in most cases it could hardly be called genuine. How right was St. Augustine in saying that people should be led to baptism *by persuasion*, not *under compulsion*. Besides, experience has shown that each Hebrew brought over to our faith constitutes a case *sui generis*.

I therefore believe that in addition to answering the spiritual needs of Christian residents, pilgrims and visitors, only two tasks will now rest with the missionaries, or rather, with the priests and nuns who will come to Israel. In the first place, they will lead a life of prayer, following the

admirable example of the Clarisses, who live, amidst the general respect of the population, in Jerusalem, on the very line that divides the Arabs and Israelis, and in Nazareth. This is the worthiest mission a Christian can fulfil on earth—to act as intercessor between his fellow-men and the Almighty. In the second place, their presence, always a factor of importance in a country where it can make the Christian way of life known to others and thus help to obviate antipathy, becomes here a matter of sacred duty, in the region where Jesus spent the whole of his earthly life, and where transcendental investigations into the origins of Christianity are being carried out at present. For the rest, we must put our trust in the Lord and refrain from making short term plans with specific aims; human foresight has sufficiently proved its unreliability by now.

I do not ignore the substantial gap that separates Israel from Christendom in the religious field. Neither a true Jew nor a Catholic could even conceive of a conciliation or, if you prefer, a religious compromise *implying mutual concessions in matter of creed*. We are faced with a *fait accompli* that can be changed neither by external means nor by hiding or ignoring our respective faiths. This, however, does not preclude the possibility of living together in harmony or, Christianly speaking, of establishing bonds of charity, that is, of love. I sincerely hope that the era of hatred and mutual suspicion has come to an end, and that, our differences notwithstanding, we shall consider ourselves as brothers—sons of the same Father who is in Heaven. I know perfectly well that this approach is not incompatible with Jewish doctrine; to us Christians it is a categorical imperative. Whilst, therefore, it may take time before these views will be shared by all, sooner or later that day is bound to come.

#### THE RELIGIOUS PROBLEM IN ISRAEL

I confess that, being a Catholic, it is not without hesitation that I venture to discuss a problem directly connected with the Jews. I would rather leave it alone, were it not for the fact that the chosen people is involved, whose religious life, though in a different way, is as much our concern as theirs.

The whole tradition of Israel is eminently religious. Their history revolves around the mutual loyalty of God and the people descended from the Patriarch. A rhythm can be discerned throughout the Old Testament: sin, punishment, repentance, renewal of the promise. Even when committed by a large section of the people, the sin is invariably the same one: faithlessness towards the true God, and idolatry.

In our days, non-religious, if not irreligious, people can easily be found both in the kibbutzim and in the towns of modern Israel. It is true that the sabbatical rest is strictly observed, that there is not one ounce of pork to be had throughout the country, and that the Mosaic



practices are kept with zeal. But the question that arises is whether all this is considered nowadays as religion or merely as racial tradition. Of course I do not ignore the strictly orthodox groups. I have even had the opportunity of meeting some Hassidic Jews for whom the observance of religious precepts is never dissociated from everyday life, and who consider the average Hebrew as a *goy*. But many have reduced their faith to some vague theism which has nothing typically Jewish.

The problem therefore is whether Israel, as a State, will go on believing in the *promise* and living in accordance with the belief, or will reach a state of more or less complete secularism, i.e., will forget that promise.

To my mind, it is obvious that Eretz Israel could not be governed nowadays by a renewed Sanhedrin,—among other reasons because many Jews would not accept it. Their Declaration of Independence, as well as the proposed Constitution, are considered by some as merely formal documents, while others think they are excessively religious. Were they, however, to allow the faith of their ancestors to sink into oblivion, their position in the historic land which has come to be theirs again, would be seriously endangered.

In my opinion, the ancient law is as valid at present as it was in ancient times, and the danger involved in secularism is greater for Israel than for any other people on earth. As I said before, I do not think the theocratic regime could be revived, but I am convinced that, particularly amidst the Arab nations, for whom the Quran is law, a practically atheist Israel, or one vaguely theist, would be an absurdity from whose consequences the Jews would be the first to suffer.

Israel is surrounded by threats to its existence as a State. The Arabs have not forgiven the Israelis for the defeat inflicted upon them and they look forward to the day of "revenge". The maintenance of economic stability puts a great strain on the nation and the situation could easily become desperate. I think the people of Israel would do well therefore to recall the words of the Bible: "If the Lord will not protect the city, in vain will labour those who are pledged to its defence".

## A STUDY TOUR OF ISRAEL\*

(Observations and Reflections)

By Dr. Mary Rose Allen

To summarize the reactions of the members of the recent American Christian Palestine Committee Study Tour to Israel is a difficult task indeed; for each individual comes to the Holy Land for his own deep and very personal reasons. None of us can truly describe the feelings of another as he stands at last on the soil of the great Old Testament prophets, and where Our Lord walked and worked and died for us. In the group of 21 leading Christians were representatives of 14 States, 11 different Christian denominations and 12 professions. Each brought with him his own childhood dreams to be linked here with reality. Each had his own adult interests and predilections.

But whatever our differences in background, all of us in the group could readily express our joyous recognition of the new life which has been given this beloved land by the new Israel. Here our great religious principles are being made a living reality on the very scene of their origin. Religion tells us to embrace the unwanted; Israel has done this *en masse*, under terrible strain. Religion says: feed the hungry and assist the poor; Israel shares its food and resources, and more—it teaches the people skills which give them individual dignity and insure them against future want. Religion says: heal the sick; Israel's great hospitals and health programmes assuage one's fears of going uncared for. Religion says: love thy neighbour; and love is the spirit in which all these plans for the rehabilitation of a displaced people were conceived.

We were deeply touched by the tireless devotion shown in the care of the Christian Holy Places by the Christian clergy who have remained faithful and hospitable at their stations through much international turmoil. Likewise we noted with pleasure the respect with which such Holy Sites are treated by the Government of Israel.

We were impressed by the interesting Arab leaders, who both in their praise and their criticism testify to the attitude of the government, which arouses the admiration of some of them, and allows others freedom to voice their complaints.

There is no reason why the three great faiths cannot have a happy union here in the framework of Democracy. They go together in a natural and creative combination.

But did we, on our tour, see only good in the new Israel? No, it would be impossible for travellers to miss the fact that many new immigrants are still in canvas tents after more than a year. Neither did we all agree with certain of the methods by which the social programmes and development operations of the country are being implemented. Of course the tourist is the first to be tempted by the black market, and

\* See "Christian News from Israel", Vol. III, No. 1-2, June 1952, pages 10-11.

the austerity difficulties and problems of minority groups are quite evident. These are things common, in one way or another, to most of the countries of the world today. The notable difference between Israel and other nations is the vigorous spirit of unity which refuses to let common difficulties discourage its promise to save lives.

It is not, as we all agree, the duty of the religious person to accent the negative aspects of life anywhere. We must see and build upon the positive elements of a people and their programme of living. So, as Christian visitors, we could not help feeling a kinship with this nation which is building on human strengths rather than human frailties. We felt at home, as Americans, with the vital progress of industry and the leaders' demands for a high standard of living for all people throughout the land. In the completeness of this plan for housing, medical insurance and political freedoms, it might be said that little Israel has been able to surpass even older democracies.

We have heard complaints (perhaps valid from their point of view) from religious leaders of the non-Jewish groups here. But we cannot help remembering that, in the history of our own great democracy, religious freedom was not always so complete as it is here. In most countries of the world today there is not the same careful consideration of religious minority rights as Israel has guaranteed from the first day of its young life. It is a remarkable thing in history, after all, when a nation gives these guarantees from its *inception*. This has seldom been done. Had Jews always been given the spiritual and political safety in Christian and Moslem lands which these faiths are given by the Jewish State, much shame and bloodshed might have been spared the human race.

As "armchair analysts" of world affairs we often come to the conclusion that modern Israel's overcoming of the tremendous odds against her is a "miracle". But the visitor must make a new appraisal when he knows the country first-hand. We have too often used the word "miracle" for something we don't comprehend. Ben Gurion himself has used the term in describing the establishment of the State. True, it is hard for us to understand that this, a scattered and battered people, could gather itself together and achieve its home at last. And it is difficult, even for a Prime Minister who knows so well his people's human weaknesses as well as their strengths, to accept full credit on their behalf for such an achievement. But we dare not fail, in this atomic day, to recognize the human significance of Israel. If we say it is a miracle, we deny that faith in religion and our fellow human beings can be the driving force it must be in order that we fulfil our ideals. We must, moreover, study more carefully this amazing achievement as a way by which more men may be able to find a secure future.

Our biblical leaders outlined definite methods by which we might earn a better life and exhorted us to follow them. Furthermore, they were outlined on a national as well as a personal scale. Let us hasten to recognise their application and success when we see them in modern life.



The Jewish people made a compact with destiny, and they are keeping that compact—not without all the difficulties that a solemn historical promise entails, but with the honourable determination so characteristic of the biblical people as they strove to meet their agreements with God.

Perhaps that is why Israel's outstanding "tourist attraction" is her people. They are—with all their warmth of expression and hospitality—a nation with a sense of destiny.

## **AGREEMENT BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION \***

*(From an article published in "Die Friedenswarte", Basle, Vol. 51, No. 2, 1952  
Verlag für Recht und Gesellschaft)*

On the 29th of August, 1951, an agreement was reached which will add an important contribution to the normalization of relations between the State of Israel and Protestantism.

The Lutheran World Federation in Geneva, which is a Church federation comprising local groups in about 30 countries and with a membership of about 60 million, has been negotiating since the beginning of 1950 to prevent the confiscation of millions of pounds invested during the course of almost a hundred years' activity by German Protestant missions in Palestine. During the War the British Mandatory Government interned a great part of the personnel of these missions as enemy aliens and used their property for various other purposes. After the creation of the State of Israel in May, 1948, this property was occupied by Jewish organizations or by the State, and eventually a law was passed which officially requisitioned all German possessions in Israel pending the settlement of Jewish reparation claims in Germany.

On the occasion of his visit to Palestine, Pastor Dr. Schiotz, of the American National Lutheran Council of New York, succeeded in fixing a date for the reception of a delegation of the Lutheran World Federation by the Israel Minister of Finance. Their first talk took place on January 26th, 1950, in Tel Aviv. The Lutheran World Federation was represented by Dr. O. Frederick Nolde, Professor of Theology at Philadelphia, and Dr. Max Habicht, Advocate in Geneva and New York. Mr. Eliezer Kaplan, Minister of Finance, and Mr. Chaim Kadmon, Administrator General, conducted these and the subsequent negotiations on behalf of Israel. Later, Advocate Jean Brunschvig of Geneva participated as Legal Adviser.

The first practical result of the negotiations in January, 1950, consisted in permission being granted to Dr. Habicht, accompanied by

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\* By kind permission of the Editor of "Die Friedenswarte".

Israeli officials, to inspect and estimate the value of the total former property of the German Protestant missions in Israel.

The representatives of the Lutheran World Federation found, first and foremost, a completely intact church and presbytery in a largely destroyed quarter of Jaffa which had formerly belonged to the German Evangelical Church community. The presbytery was now occupied by several immigrant families with numerous children who had moved in after the damage caused by the fighting in Jaffa. The church organ had just been repaired, and was used, on the occasion of this visit, for Divine Service of the Anglican Church.

Thirty kilometres South-East of Jaffa lay the large agricultural estate of Bir-Salem, which had been originally founded and built for Syrian orphans by the German missionary family Schneller. At the time of the visit the estate, with its total area of approximately three million square metres, was occupied by a Kibbutz, i.e. an agricultural colony of Jewish immigrants, called "Buchenwald". The greater number of the 160 women and men of this kibbutz were former inmates of the infamous German concentration camp of the same name. They had taken over the estate during the Israel-Arab war and created a new home for themselves in which over 50 children—part of them orphans—were being brought up and educated by the colony.

In the Jewish part of Jerusalem were four large building compounds of the former German missionaries. Most notable of these was the *Syrian Orphanage* at the outskirts of the town, which, with its numerous houses, constituted a village of its own, containing a ceramics factory, a printing press and other workshops. This was the creation of the Suabian missionary Ludwig Schneller, who first came to the Holy Land in the middle of last century in the service of missionary circles from Basle.

The former *German Hospital* in Jerusalem, a large building in the centre of town, for half a century under the patronage of the Rhine-Westphalian Deaconesses Association, was first put under British direction after the outbreak of the War and was then transformed into a hospital of the Jewish philanthropic institution Hadassah.

This same Deaconesses Association also maintained an orphanage for girls in Jerusalem, the *Talitha-Kumi* school, which stands today in the middle of the rapidly growing town's business centre and the grounds of which have therefore become particularly valuable.

The fourth large property compound in New Jerusalem which was formerly German-Protestant mission property was the so-called *Probstei*, the seat of the highest Protestant German dignitaries. At the time of the inspection the buildings were being used partly as the Tuberculosis Home of Hadassah and partly as a Jewish professional school.

Similarly churches, schools and missions were inspected in Haifa, on Mount Carmel, in Nazareth and in El Bassa, which had been directed

by German societies until the outbreak of the second World War, and which were all in relatively good condition.

What then was in fact the legal position of all these properties?

During the War the Mandatory Government had requisitioned the greatest part of them as "Enemy Property" and had drawn rent from them. Shortly before the end of the Mandatory Regime all requisitioning orders were cancelled and the total rents collected, amounting to approximately £60,000, were handed over to Dr. Moll, the representative of the Lutheran World Federation. After the 14th of May, 1948, the Israel Government took over practical control of all these properties, and when the negotiations between the Lutheran World Federation and the Israel Government first began, a draft law was already in existence according to which all German property, inclusive of the missions, was to be expropriated for purposes of reparations to Israel.

In July, 1950, this law was passed by the Israel Parliament. It contains the following clause:—

"The Minister of Finance is authorized to abrogate the rights or power of action which (in accordance with the law) are attributed to the administrator of requisitioned property 1) in the case of property used as an exclusive and permanent place of religious worship or 2) in cases where the owner was a church, religious, cultural, educational, charitable or philanthropic institution."

This clause furnished a legal basis for successful negotiations with the Israel Government on questions of special treatment of hospitals, schools, orphanages, etc., of former German missions in Israel, as exceptions to the expropriation law.

The next problem which arose was whether or not it was feasible for the former German missions to utilize their restored property for recommencing their activities in Israel.

On the one hand it was generally recognized that these missions added an important contribution to the cultural life of the former Palestine, while, on the other hand, it was unthinkable that the present personnel of the German missions would be tolerated by Israel public opinion. To this a new factor was added: since the creation of the State of Israel such changes have taken place in the population of the country, that the former Arab sectors of the people, which received particular attention from the Christian missions, have virtually disappeared. If and when new schools, hospitals and orphanages become a necessity in Israel, the new State will see to their creation as part of its duty towards the citizens of the country.

As a consequence of the structural changes in the political and social life of the country, all Christian missions in Israel have, to a large extent, lost their field of activity.

Intensive study of these problems inevitably convinced the Lutheran World Federation that Protestant mission activities, in the measure in



which they existed before the second World War in Israel, are now impossible, and that consequently the negotiations had to concentrate on retrieving all places of worship in order to organize therein services for Christians in Israel. As for the remaining mission property, the aim was to receive monetary compensation to be used in those places where Christian missionary work was both desired and necessary.

As the outcome of negotiations—by no means simple—in New York in the Autumn of 1950, and in Geneva in May, June and August, 1951, an agreement was finally formulated whereby the churches and presbyteries in Jaffa and Haifa were handed over to the Lutheran World Federation, and whereby the State of Israel was to pay an additional compensation of 50,000 dollars plus IL.550,000 to the Lutheran World Federation. At the official rate of exchange this meant repayment of approximately 7,000,000 Swiss francs or 1,750,000 dollars for former German Protestant mission property in Israel. These monies were to be paid to the Lutheran World Federation, whose intention it was to use them again for international work in this field.

The fact that such an agreement was at all concluded is, in itself, an example of fruitful international collaboration. American circles, under the direction of the Rev. Dr. Franklin C. Fry in New York, took over the initiative and financial responsibility. A Council of Trustees within the Lutheran World Federation, under the Presidency of Professor Nygren (Sweden), watched over the negotiations. The former owners, the German missionary groups, made their influence felt in order to bring about an all-round acceptable solution. Through the cooperation of Dr. Habicht and Consul Lutz an important contribution was added to the negotiations. The American Executive Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, Dr. Michelfelder, whose untimely death is deplored, showed great diplomatic skill in smoothing out numerous difficulties during the proceedings. Finally it must be mentioned that, without the goodwill and devotion of the previously mentioned representatives of the Israel Government, such an agreement could never have been reached at all.

It is too early to predict what will be the fruits of this agreement between a great part of the Protestant World and the State of Israel. But it surely constitutes an important contribution to the easing of political, religious and social tensions in the Holy Land.

## ARAB EDUCATION IN ISRAEL\*

*By Mr. J. L. Ben-or, Associate Director General,  
Ministry of Education and Culture*

Probably the most outstanding feature of Arab education in this country is its rapid development during the first four years of the State of Israel. While no far-reaching changes have occurred in the number of Arab residents in Israel since 1949, educational services provided for them by the State have in this period been more than doubled. Official schools maintained by the Ministry of Education in conjunction with local authorities increased from 59 in 1949 to 105 in 1952, the number of teachers from 250 to 752 and that of pupils from roughly 10,000 to 26,374. In addition, there were 50 private schools, run by various Christian bodies, with about 7,000 pupils and 228 teachers. At the close of the 1951/52 school year, therefore, the total of Arab schools in Israel came to 155 with about 33,300 pupils.

This rapid expansion clearly cannot be expected to continue in the immediate future. Only a handful of Arab villages remain in the country which have no educational facilities. In most of these, if not in all, schools will be opened this year. The limit of expansion should therefore soon be reached unless it becomes possible to establish separate schools for girls.

On the other hand, the number of Arab pupils should still grow substantially. Contrary to the practice of the Mandatory regime, there is no limitation on budgetary grounds. New classes are opened and teachers appointed, as pupils enrol. It is true that the provisions of the Compulsory Education Act of 1950—which applies to Arabs as well as Jews—have not yet been fully translated into reality. According to present estimates, about 9,000 Arab girls are still without schooling. But this is due solely to reluctance on the part of parents. It may be hoped, however, that such reluctance will be progressively overcome: the proportion of girls in the Arab school population has already risen from 20 per cent in 1949 to 32 per cent in 1952.

Apart from the numerical progress, headway has also been made in certain other respects, although a variety of problems still remain to be solved. One important aspect is the administrative status of Arab schools. In Mandatory days, the bulk of Arab schools in villages, and an increasing number in the towns, were maintained by the Government; whereas the Jewish educational system was under the administration of local authorities. In order to equalize the position of the two sectors, the Israel Government formally transferred the Arab schools to the authority of local councils three years ago. As a further step, following the promulgation of the Compulsory Education Act, local education authorities

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\* This article will be of special interest for the student of Christian Affairs, as the vast majority of Christians in Israel are Arabs.

were established in all places still lacking such bodies and the right was granted to them to levy local rates for education purposes.

For the time being, of course, such rates cannot be expected to ease the Government's financial burden to any appreciable degree. Their main purpose is to give the Arab population a sense of responsibility for their educational affairs, in line with the other provisions of the Education Act. That law, in fact, charges the local education authorities with the provision and maintenance of school buildings, the registration of pupils, the control of their attendance, and similar incidental matters. To all these purposes the local education rates are to be applied; and as their use is subject to Government supervision and entails the rendering of accounts, a welcome by-product of the scheme is to provide Arab villages with a practical object lesson in public administration generally.

Important as is this transfer of responsibility to the local level, an even more significant change, from the Arab point of view, lies in the introduction of co-education. Of the 105 schools maintained by the Government today, 95 are attended by boys and girls together, and run by mixed staffs of male and female teachers. This innovation did not arise from considerations of principle. It was simply the outcome of practical difficulties—lack of school premises, shortage of qualified women teachers, and the small numbers of girls in the medium and upper forms. Not unnaturally, co-education was at first resented. But such resentment disappeared soon enough. With the exception of Druzes and some Beduin tribes in the Negev who still have not come round to the idea, the new system is today fully accepted by both Christian and Moslem Arabs. An inevitable, if undesirable, result of this has been the need to appoint numbers of women teachers without proper qualifications, at times with only seven years of elementary schooling or even less. There can be no question in the prevailing circumstances of maintaining separate schools for girls. To train a sufficient reserve of women teachers will be a matter of 5—10 years. Unless the attitude of the Druzes should change in the meantime, there can be no satisfactory solution to their education problem before then. Even more difficult seems the task of overcoming the resistance of the Beduins, who object not only to co-education, but—owing to their traditions—to any schooling for girls.

Needless to say, all these developments go far beyond the narrow educational sphere. They in fact involve a social revolution. One small aspect of the latter, incidentally, is that Arab women teachers are no longer required, as they were under the Mandatory regime, to give up their work on marrying. Quite a number of such former teachers have indeed returned to the profession, and there are many others who have married in recent years and stayed at their jobs.

A further consequence of the scarcity of teaching personnel is that almost 10 per cent of the teachers of Arab children in 1952 were Jews. Practically all of these had a secondary education, and some had gradu-



ated from teachers' colleges or universities. By contrast, as a result of the absence of a comprehensive training scheme for Arab teachers under the Mandate, the majority of the Arab teachers available at the time had not completed a secondary school course and many had had only seven years of elementary schooling if not less. Little was done by the Mandatory authorities to train Arab teachers. Until a few years ago there existed a single teachers' college in Jerusalem that required matriculation certificates from students, and its output of certified teachers did not exceed twenty a year.

It is therefore not surprising that the Israeli authorities, in building up a ramified school system for the Arab population, have to accept whatever candidates are forthcoming. Their efforts at higher standards for Arab teachers also have to contend against a number of serious technical obstacles—lack of housing for teachers transferred from other places, unwillingness of qualified women teachers to go to outlying villages, and the fact that the bulk of qualified teachers are Christians, whereas the majority of the pupils are Moslems.

A variety of measures have been taken to cope with the situation. In the first place, attempts are being made to develop inspection services, though the number of inspectors available is quite inadequate. Secondly, two intensive courses for the training of some 50 teachers each were held in 1950 and 1951. Thirdly, post-graduate courses were organised during the summer vacations in those two years, attended by 300 and 150 Arab teachers respectively. Finally, external examination facilities have been introduced for general secondary education and specific pedagogic subjects.

No real solution of the problem can be expected, of course, before sufficient secondary schools and teachers' colleges become available for the Arab population. For the time being, after the introduction of eight forms in Arab elementary schools in 1950, the aim is to build up an increasing number of secondary classes. Last year eighth forms existed in 29 schools, ninth forms in 8, tenth forms in 7, and an eleventh form only in one Nazareth school. This year a twelfth form has been opened which will enable graduates at the end of the year to sit for the general Israeli matriculation examinations.

While it is hoped that ninth forms will be added to many elementary schools, higher forms can probably be organised in a few places only. For one thing, there is the lack of qualified teachers. But apart from this it seems desirable that graduates from secondary schools should have an intimate knowledge of Jewish affairs in Israel—an aim which can only be attained if such schools are close to centres of Jewish life.

Of more immediate interest, of course, are the short-term measures referred to above. What, then, has been the outcome of those vacation courses already mentioned? The answer is not easy to give. Owing to great differences in the educational standards of students, attainments in theoretical subjects varied considerably. On the other hand, good results

were achieved in such practical subjects as drawing, handicrafts and music. It is true, however, that in quite a number of instances teachers did not prove able subsequently to make practical use of their new theoretical accomplishments. A case in point is the problem of corporal punishment. Great efforts were made to impress on students the need for more progressive means of maintaining discipline. Nevertheless, many afterwards relapsed into their old primitive ways. Despite such disappointments, however, the courses served a number of useful purposes. If they accomplished nothing else, they at any rate set teachers thinking about modern concepts.

That in itself is no mean achievement; for it has to be borne in mind that traditional Arab education does not aim primarily at developing the child's own personality, but rather at encouraging imitation of adult behaviour. A characteristic expression of that trend is the excessive value set upon memorizing and similar formal exercises—practices which the Israeli authorities are now striving to replace by more appropriate ones.

Among the changes introduced with a view to modernizing teaching methods is the principle that, in the first and second forms, all subjects must be taught by one teacher only; that history lessons are to begin only in the sixth form, instead of in the first; that the study of the nature and geography of Israel, as well as of hygiene, should be treated as one subject in the four lowest forms; that more time is to be devoted to sports; and that music lessons should be given as far as teachers are available. In addition, corporal punishment has been officially abolished, as mentioned above.

Last year new curricula were published in many subjects, mostly based on the new curricula adopted in Jewish schools. Curricula in the remaining subjects are being prepared.

A particularly thorny problem is the teaching of the Arabic language. Strange as it may sound, instruction in this subject leaves much to be desired in all Arab countries. Such efforts as have been made outside Israel to improve the teaching of grammar have not yet yielded satisfactory results. But the position is even worse with regard to reading, writing and literature lessons. Not only does the Arabic script present considerable difficulties to the beginner, but there are vast differences between the spoken and the written language. It is therefore not surprising that at least four to five years are required in all Arab countries before pupils can freely use and understand text books. To overcome these difficulties, the Israeli authorities are now endeavouring to simplify matters by basing the teaching even of written Arabic on the spoken language, and in particular on the vocabulary known to the child. This new departure still meets with strong opposition on the part of both teachers and the general public. It may be hoped, nevertheless, that it will come to be accepted in due course and thus pave the way for more funda-

mental reforms. A beginning has already been made in the direction of publishing readers for beginners.

A special problem is that of teaching Hebrew. While keen interest in this language exists among the Arab population of Israel, lack of suitable teachers acts as a serious brake. Not only are Hebrew schools themselves short of staff, but it is difficult to ask Jewish teachers, whether single or married, to live in purely Arab surroundings for more than a year or two. Conditions are, of course, easier in towns with a mixed population such as Jerusalem, Jaffa and Haifa; but the majority of Arab schools are in villages. The two short courses for teachers already mentioned provided a beginning of the solution: the students in these courses had a short training in Hebrew, and they started to teach the language when they were appointed as teachers. Now most of the Hebrew teaching is done by Arab teachers.

Arrangements are further complicated by the need to respect the different days of rest—Friday, Saturday and Sunday—as well as the various holidays of the three religions. Despite these technical problems, however, reasonable working conditions are being evolved and in some important respects the situation has improved considerably since the days of the Mandate.

An advisory Council on Arab Education and Culture has been appointed, which includes Jews and Arabs of all denominations.

### STUDENTS OF THE PONTIFICAL BIBLICAL INSTITUTE IN ROME VISIT ISRAEL

*By the Rev. Father A. Semkowski, S.J.,  
Director of the P.B.I. in Jerusalem*

As the culmination of a three-year course of Hebrew and biblical backgrounds, thirty priests from the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome made an intensive tour of Israel from Friday, July 25th, to Wednesday, August 6th. These visits take place annually, circumstances permitting, and this was the 23rd such visit sponsored by the Institute since 1913.

The students were welcomed upon arrival by officials of the Israel Government. Their first impression of Israel was of the Sabbath repose; on Friday afternoon and Saturday in Jerusalem they made only brief visits on foot—to the Cenacle and the church of the Dormition on Mount Zion, and to the Sanhedria tombs.

On Sunday morning, July 27th, the party set off at an early hour by bus for Beersheba. En route they stopped at Beth Shemesh to admire the valley where Samson grew up and David met Goliath, and glanced at the two imposing Catholic farm-schools at Rafat and Beth Jamal, situ-



ated in that area. At Beth-Guvrin they were shown the celebrated Byzantine mosaic and some of the famous "painted caves of Marissa", and later in the morning the impressive ruins of Lakish. After dining in Beersheba, the party glimpsed Gaza from the road, then paid a long visit to the extensive seaside ruins of Ascalon, and returned to Jerusalem.

Next morning the head of the Israel Department of Antiquities personally conducted them through his Museum. The afternoon was occupied with a picturesque drive to Eyn Kerem and Abu Ghosh.

On Tuesday the pilgrims took reluctant leave of the Jerusalem house of the Pontifical Biblical Institute and headed for Tel-Aviv and Jaffa. En route they visited Gezer, surrendering peaceably to the Israel Army, who were occupying the hill on manoeuvres at the time. After further brief halts in Lydda and Ramleh, the priests visited the Abu Kebir Museum of Tel Aviv, enjoyed a thorough inspection of the ruins of Tel Qasile north of the Yarkon river, and saw the rocks of Jonah at Bat-Yam. They were lodged hospitably by the Frères and other convents of Jaffa near the traditional "House of Simon the Tanner".

The sixth day of the trip was spent along the Sharon coast, including stops at Caesarea, Dor and the prehistoric caves of Athlit. The group passed the night on Mount Tabor, and were surprised to find a large party of young Israelis who had come for an outing to the same spot, and whose attitude towards the church services was one of irreproachable silence and reverence.

On Thursday, July 31st, the party visited the moshav Tel Adashim and showed great interest in the Israel cooperative farm movement. After an afternoon spent in Nazareth, Cana, and Sepphoris, they were received on Friday at the kibbutz Tel Yoseph. Their interest in this kibbutz was so great and their questions so numerous that their guide was kept busy answering them throughout the whole trip to Beth-Shan, breaking in only long enough to point out the principal attractions—the famous excavation of Tel el-Hosn and another excavation in Beth-Shan which he himself had conducted.

Friday afternoon's visits took in the Fountain of Gideon at Eyn Harod, the excavations of Megiddo, and the synagogue of Beth-She'arim. Next day—Saturday—the visitors remained quietly in Nazareth, enjoying the hospitality of the Franciscan Fathers and the guidance of the Jesuit Father Senès.

On Sunday the party reached Dan in the far north-east, where they saw the cool sources of the Jordan; during dinner in the kibbutz dining hall their perplexities about the religious problems of the communal life were ably dealt with by a school-teacher of Dan. The same afternoon they visited Hulata on Lake Huleh, and reached the venerated synagogue of Capernaum and the hospice of Tabgha.

On Monday morning a few intrepid pedestrians of the party made their way to Orey-me, Khan Minye, and the Ez-Zuttiye caves. In the

afternoon the whole party went by bus to Beth Yerah and Degania Aleph, and enjoyed a boat journey on the lake from Tiberias to Eyn Gev.

The last day of travel included Safed, Meron, Acre and Mount Carmel. Next day, August 6th, all went aboard the *Grimani* in Haifa in a spirit of complete satisfaction. The trip had been efficient and comfortable beyond their hopes, thanks to the cooperation of the Israel authorities and the fine highway-upkeep and bus facilities.

The services of conservation, continued excavation and guidance, afforded by the Israel Department of Antiquities, earned unanimous praise. The party was most appreciative of the cordial, assiduous and expert assistance which they received at the hands of the guides of the Department, who accompanied them in the various stages of their tour. Observing the clear and durable signposts with which the highways are so magnificently provided, it occurred to the party that similar signposts, set up at the chief points of interest on the famous excavation sites, could help the visitor to grasp precisely what objects visible at each point had given the excavator grounds for suggesting his identification: good examples are the Stables of Solomon at Megiddo and the Egyptian Fortress in Ascalon. Signposts might also very usefully describe some famous museum-piece unearthed at a particular point, such as the Calendar of Gezer or the Ostraca of Lakish. In this way the visitor's attention could be focussed and he could profit by his visit even when (as must sometimes happen) the local guide is not acquainted with the history and publications of the excavation.

The only disappointment of these biblical students was that they were not compelled to make use of Hebrew in their contacts with the Israelis. They recognised the local language as identical with that which they had studied for many years in Rome, but found everyone too fluent in a variety of European languages.

The Rector of the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome, Rev. Ernest Vogt, S.J., himself accompanied the pilgrimage. At its close he expressed to Dr. Maisler, Rector Designate of the Hebrew University, his complete satisfaction with the facilities afforded to students visiting Israel; and especially with the success of the efforts made by the Jerusalem Pontifical Institute to accomodate priests visiting Israel singly or in groups under the direction of the Rome Institute.

## SOME SUMMER PILGRIMAGES

*By the Rev. Father John Roger*

During the summer of 1952 pilgrimages were particularly frequent. This short account, which does not pretend to be complete, merely sets out to call attention to some of them and to review some general aspects of the tours.

It goes without saying that the main purpose of every pilgrimage is to visit and pray at the Holy Places. Contacts with the various aspects of day-to-day life in Israel, whilst not entirely ignored, must of necessity take second place.

A group of some 70 people, led by Abbé Lecomte, professor of Holy Scriptures in the Catholic faculties at Lille, entered Israel through the Mandelbaum Gate for a four-day trip. Although hampered by a number of mishaps in transport, they were not deterred either from prayer or meditation in the various sanctuaries, or from tasting the pleasure of crossing the Lake of Tiberias in a motor launch.

A group of 25 visitors of the "L'Eau Vive" Clan of Paris came here with their chaplain, the Abbé Steinmann, vicar of Notre Dame de Paris and author of a number of exegetical works (Isaiah, Jeremiah). They went through the country mainly on foot or, occasionally, as hitch-hikers. It was on the surroundings of the Lake of Tiberias—one of the few spots which still presents the same aspect now as it did at the time of Christ—that they concentrated their attention, sometimes sleeping on the ground by the shores of the lake. At the kibbutz Eyn Hanatziv, where an old French scout leader by the name of Chameau lives, they were received in a truly brotherly fashion and lit a camp fire in company with members of the kibbutz.

A group of about 30 teachers came from Troyes under the leadership of Abbé Ledit, chaplain of the University Parish. After their arrival in Haifa these teachers embarked upon a truly biblical pilgrimage, visiting Old Testament localities on Mount Carmel and the scenes of Christ's youth in Nazareth, of his public life around Lake Tiberias, and finally of his death and resurrection in Jerusalem. It was a "progress" in the truest scriptural sense, during which they prayed on various occasions for the country which had welcomed them.

The pilgrimage of the "Centre Richelieu" (Sorbonne, Paris) was in numbers the most important of the season. It consisted of some 230 people, mainly men and girl students, as well as about 80 priests. After solemn mass at the church of the Dormition, Jerusalem, the group left for Nazareth in a convoy of six motor-buses. Two kilometres before Nazareth they halted and continued on foot, singing under the starry skies of Galilee. The excursions during the ten days spent in Israel were carried out mainly on foot, as the pilgrims wanted truly to "retrace the steps of Christ". Rev. Father Charles was in charge of the pilgrimage.



One of the participants was Father Jean Daniélou, Professor of Theology at Paris, who specialises on missionary questions and is the author of numerous books, as well as a contributor to several important Reviews, such as "Les Etudes", "Dieu Vivant", "Les Cahiers Sioniens", etc. During his stay in Jerusalem, Father Daniélou had talks with Professor Martin Buber and Dr. Wardi.

A group of the "Itinerari della Fede" of Assisi came on their 5th pilgrimage to the Holy Land, this time as a party of about 40 pilgrims under the leadership of Don Giovanni Rossi. Inspired by the Association "Pro Civitate Christiana", which has its seat in Assisi, this pilgrimage strove, above all, to be an act of faith to be lived up to and continued in the daily life of each participant. They visited the Holy Places under the genial and expert guidance of Father Bernardino of Mount Tabor. Before crossing into Arab territory the pilgrims rested one night at Notre Dame de France.

It was also at Notre Dame de France that the "Association Notre Dame de Salut" from Paris began the Israeli half of their 108th pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Father Lechat, in charge of these pilgrimages, is beginning to be a familiar figure here. Kowing literally everyone, organising, planning ahead and explaining, he is everywhere at the same time and leads his people to prayer as if it were into battle. No one can remain indifferent to his words of fire. He actually heads three pilgrimages a year to the Holy Land—in summer, at Christmas and at Easter.

We must also mention the two groups of girl-guides, one of which, while held up at the border post by some difficulty with documents, gave a veritable concert of French folk-songs to the delight of both the Jewish and Arab soldiers. The second group made friends with a group of nurses at Hadassah during a common watch at the Institute of St. Joseph in Jerusalem.

There was also a group led by Abbé Lys, of Lille, which succeeded in crossing the frontier lines in both directions.

It is encouraging to see this increase in the movement of Christians to the Holy Land. All those who come are profoundly touched by the contact with this country of the Old and New Testaments. And in addition to the religious value of these trips, they permit an insight into the country and its people which constitutes a not unimportant factor for the promotion of better understanding amongst the nations.

## CHRISTIAN PERIODICALS IN THE HOLY LAND

The Christian Churches in the Holy Land publish a number of periodicals dealing with religious, ecclesiastical and communal matters, past and present. The following have recently been received by the Editor:

**NEA SION.** A periodical published in Greek by the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem. It deals with the subjects of Theology, History, Archaeology and Topography of Palestine. It also surveys the ecclesiastical life in the Orthodox Churches, registers ecclesiastical events, and follows the religious and intellectual movement of other Communities. Particular attention is devoted to the rights and interests of the Greek Orthodox Church of Jerusalem in the Holy Places.

The last number of 1951 contains the following: "The Act of the 4th Council of Chalcedon by which the Bishop of Aelia was proclaimed a Patriarch", by Archim. Aristobulos N. Mousikides; "The Patriarchate of Jerusalem", by M. C. Carapiperis; "The 1500th anniversary of the 4th Oecumenical Council of Chalcedon", by Archim. Callistos Milliaras; "Michael Syngelos on Orthography", by M. C. Carapiperis; "How Constantine the Great is said to have viewed the Holy Places", by His Beatitude Timothy, Patriarch of Jerusalem; "Remarkable Men at the head of the Church of Jerusalem", by Archim. Stephanos Balascas; "The meaning of the celebration of the 1900th anniversary of Christian Greece of St. Paul's and Athens"; "Thoughts of an Anglican", by Rev. Edward Every; Bibliography; Miscellaneous; Ecclesiastical Chronicle.

**LE MONITEUR DIOCESAIN.** A monthly (of 24 pages) published in French by the Latin Patriarchate in Jerusalem. Its contents are, in the main, pastoral letters, news and articles concerning the diocese of Jerusalem, but it also includes passages from encyclicals and allocutions issued by the Pope. The subject-matter is grouped under the following heads:—The Voice of the Holy Father; the Voice of the Pastor (the Patriarch); Acta Sanctae Sedis; Communications of the Institutions; Varia; Chronicle of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre; Religious News; Obituary; Bibliography.

Of interest to students of history are "The Belief in the Assumption in the Church of Jerusalem" by Abel; "The 6th centenary of the Custody of the Holy Land", by Talatinian; "The origins of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem", by Musset.

**TERRA SANTA**, an Italian bi-monthly, and **TIERRA SANTA**, a Spanish monthly, are published by the Fathers of the Custody of the Holy Land. These two illustrated periodicals are devoted mainly to the interests of the Holy Places, but also contain articles and news of general Christian and historical interest.

The Franciscan Fathers also publish in Arabic a parochial bulletin for the Latins in Israel entitled, "ASSALAM VE AL HEIR" ("Peace and Goodness").

**AR RABITA** ("The Link") is the official bulletin of the Greek-Catholic Archbishop of St. Jean d'Acre and of all Galilee. A monthly, it is published in Arabic, comprising about 32 to 40 pages and with a circulation of approximately 2,000. The bulletin was founded by Mgr. G. Hakim, and the first issue appeared in January, 1944. Its title, "The Link", is that of the French Review which Mgr. G. Hakim, then head of the Patriarchal College in Cairo, published there in 1935.

"Ar Rabita" contains news of the Greek-Catholic community, episcopal letters, pontifical directives and various articles on sociology, history, liturgy etc.

SION, a Monthly of Religion, Literature and Philology, is published by the Armenian Patriarchate in Armenian. The issue of June, 1952, contains, inter alia: an editorial, "The Holy Seat of Etchmiadzin and the Catholicosate of Greater Cilicia"; an article by Archbishop Derderian on Whit-Sunday; a study on Mazdaism by Rev. Vartenessian; as well as studies on literary, archaeological and artistic subjects.

MAJALLATH EL-NAHDA EL MORCOSSIA LILAKBATH EL-ORTHODOX (Monthly of the Morcossian Revival of the Orthodox Copts) is an illustrated Review of Religion and Literature published by the Coptic Bishopric of Jerusalem. The August issue contains, amongst other items:—"The Ranks of the Angels"; "Differences between the Coptic Orthodox and the Catholic Churches"; "The religious history of the Egyptians or Copts"; "A contribution to the history of the Coptic See of Jerusalem"; "St. Anthony and Education", etc.

"CHRISTIAN NEWS FROM ISRAEL," published in Israel by the Government Printer. Printed at the "Jerusalem Post" Press in Jerusalem.

SUBSCRIPTION FEE: IL.0.750 *p. annum.* Please apply direct to  
The Government Printer, Hakirya, Israel.















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